

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A network switch comprising:
2 a backplane; and
3 a plurality of interface cards coupled to the backplane via an interface, the
4 interface cards coupled to receive multiple channels of network traffic from external
5 sources, the plurality of interface cards to receive one or more channels of data according
6 to a first protocol and one or more channels of data according to a second protocol, the
7 interface cards to route the channels of data over the backplane to one or more
8 predetermined interface cards.

1 2. The network switch of claim 1 wherein the first protocol comprises a time
2 division multiplexed (TDM) protocol.

1 3. The network switch of claim 1 wherein the second protocol comprises a
2 network traffic protocol.

1 4. The network switch of claim 3 wherein the second protocol comprises an
2 asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) protocol.

1 5. The network switch of claim 3 wherein the second protocol comprises an
2 internet protocol (IP).

1 6. An interface card for use in a network switch, the interface card
2 comprising:
3 a backplane interface to transmit and receive data over a backplane;
4 a network interface to transmit and receive multiple channels of network traffic
5 from external sources, the multiple channels of network traffic to include one or more
6 channels of data according to a first protocol and one or more channels of data according
7 to a second protocol; and
8 a time slot management circuit coupled between the backplane interface and the
9 network interface, the time slot management circuit to route the channels of data over the
10 backplane to one or more predetermined destinations.

1 7. The interface card of claim 6 wherein the first protocol comprises a time
2 division multiplexed (TDM) protocol.

1 8. The interface card of claim 6 wherein the second protocol comprises a
2 network traffic protocol.

1 9. The interface card of claim 8 wherein the second protocol comprises an
2 asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) protocol.

1 10. The interface card of claim 8 wherein the second protocol comprises an
2 internet protocol (IP).

1 11. A method comprising:
2 receiving multiple channels of network traffic from external sources via a network
3 interface of an interface card, wherein the multiple channels of network traffic to include
4 one or more channels of data according to a first protocol and one or more channels of
5 data according to a second protocol;
6 routing the channels of data via a backplane connection to one or more
7 predetermined destinations.

1 12. The method of claim 11 wherein the first protocol comprises a time
2 division multiplexed (TDM) protocol.

1 13. The method of claim 11 wherein the second protocol comprises a network
2 traffic protocol.

1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein the second protocol comprises an
2 asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) protocol.

1 15. The method of claim 13 wherein the second protocol comprises an internet
2 protocol (IP).